

## Road Project Updates FROM PUBLIC WORKS

### **Abernathy & Johnson Ferry:**

Widening work continues on portions of Johnson Ferry Road from Columns Drive to River Valley Road. Please note that night paving operations have been suspended due to the cooler winter temperatures. Reconstruction of the existing bridge is underway, with an expected completion date of November 2012. The Breakwater Drive wall and fence are scheduled to be completed in early 2012.

### **Northridge/GA 400 Improvements:**

In December, Sandy Springs and the Georgia Department of Transportation hosted a public information meeting to gather citizen input on the proposed changes to the Northridge / GA 400 Interchange. The project will include improvements to the ramps at GA 400 at Northridge Road; enhancements at the intersection of Northridge Road at Dunwoody Place, Roberts Drive and Somerset Court; and improved signage for the northbound exit ramp from GA 400 and additional through lanes on Northridge Road. Based on input from the meeting, final designs will be created. Once construction begins, the project is expected to take approximately 24 months to complete.

For updates on City of Sandy Springs Capital Improvement Program (CIP) projects, visit [www.sandyspringsga.gov](http://www.sandyspringsga.gov).

## City Hires Economic Development Manager



Ms. Jahnee Prince began as the city's new Economic Development Manager on December 1, 2011. Previously, Jahnee held positions with the Council for Quality Growth and the City of Fayetteville, Georgia. She has a wealth of experience in planning

and economic development, and will initially focus her time leading the preparation of an Economic Development Plan for the City. Jahnee's work will include business recruitment and retention efforts and working on the redevelopment of aging multi-family properties in the City.

# An Eye in the Sky



*The new city-wide surveillance system will allow public safety departments real-time access providing a greater level of situational awareness throughout the City.*

A new city-wide surveillance solution will soon be helping the City of Sandy Springs Police and Fire Rescue Departments maximize resources. The surveillance system integrates real-time video and continuously updated data enabling Sandy Springs Police, Fire Rescue and EMS the ability to monitor live camera views, observe active incident locations and area patrol vehicles on the same viewing monitors. The combination of data will give Police and Fire Departments an incredible management tool and an unparalleled level of situational awareness.

"This is a powerful, non-proprietary tool that will enable us to take the level of public safety situational awareness to the next level," said Sandy Springs Police Chief Terry Sult. "It enables both police and fire to help fight crime, address situations quickly and do so with an increased level of efficiency and effectiveness."

The system is a browser-based software application designed to integrate with the city's current and future data systems to create a single platform to manage all safety, traffic, security, emergency management and operational applications. An intuitive Google Map is integrated with real-time computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and automated vehicle location (AVL) data. The solution is designed to be flexible so that it can evolve with the requirements of the Sandy Springs Police and Fire Departments.

With the system, public safety departments will have options for real-time access to in-car video, mobile access for officers on patrol, integration with existing third party camera systems and integration with the City's traffic management cameras.

## New Requirements in Business License Renewals

New regulations enacted under Georgia House Bill 87 now require that all verifiable identification be submitted **in person** or **via email**. Verifiable identification can include a driver's license or passport.

The Sandy Springs Revenue Department is located at 7840 Roswell Road, Building 500, or you can reach the Department via email at [affidavit@sandyspringsga.gov](mailto:affidavit@sandyspringsga.gov).

### Contact Us

**Sandy Springs Web site:** [www.sandyspringsga.gov](http://www.sandyspringsga.gov)

**Sandy Springs Citizen Response Center:** 770.730.5600

**Like us on Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/COSSGA](http://www.facebook.com/COSSGA)

**Follow us on Twitter:** @SandySpringsGA

**Report via Smartphone App:** COSSpotter

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# The High Cost of Water



The single most frustrating issue I have faced since the City of Sandy Springs ("Sandy Springs") incorporated in December of 2005 concerns the water rates that the Atlanta Department of Watershed Management ("Atlanta") charges Sandy Springs residents. Sandy Springs has been burdened with this problem since incorporation.

The problem, of course, is the high price of water. The Department of Watershed Management charges Sandy Springs users a penalty that ranges from 21% to 36%, depending on the amount of water consumed. The penalty percentage is highest for the lowest use of water (up to 300 cubic feet, which is the equivalent of 2,250 gallons) and diminishes with higher consumption. A Sandy Springs resident adjacent to Atlanta city limits with monthly usage of 700 cubic feet (with minimal outside watering and excluding the sewer charge) pays 21% more than his Atlanta neighbor within the Atlanta city limits. In 2008, Sandy Springs estimated the burden of the penalty to be \$3.4 million annually on the backs of residential water users in Sandy Springs.

The actual rates on which the markup is applied rises with water usage. In other words, the cost per 100 cubic feet for a heavy water consumer is double the rate for a user who consumes water in the lowest tier. The rationale for the markup is to promote conservation of water.

Atlanta has raised its water rates annually since 2008 to pay for the sewer system improvements that were mandated by the Federal Court because Atlanta was polluting the Chattahoochee River for downstream users. Atlanta merged its water department with its sewer department, renaming the combined departments "Department of Watershed Management" in order to mingle the water rates to pay for the sewer system. This is unjust to water users in Sandy Springs. Sandy Springs residents pay sewer rates to Fulton County; therefore, when they pay water rates to Atlanta to subsidize its sewer system, Sandy Springs residents pay twice for sewer services.

Sandy Springs government has been concerned with this problem since incorporation. Of course, one of the options considered was to procure water from an adjacent jurisdiction. As we investigated our options, we ran into a roadblock called the "Service Delivery Strategy Agreement" ("SDSA"). This Agreement is a State mandate requiring jurisdictions in each county to reach agreement on the delivery of services within the county in an effective and cost-efficient manner. When Sandy Springs became a city, the then existing Agreement specified that the unincorporated area of Fulton County, now known as Sandy Springs, would receive its water from Atlanta.

We have strenuously sought to change this arrangement and challenge the 21% penalty. The bottom line is that we are tied up in the judicial system which moves with glacial speed. I met with Mayor Shirley Franklin during the first months after we became a city to no avail. Similarly, when Kasim Reed was sworn in as Mayor of Atlanta, I met with him and explained the injustice of our paying penalty rates and duplicate sewer charges. Again, I have had no response. The judicial route is all that is open to us, and we will leave no stone unturned in that pursuit.

*Eva Galambos*

Mayor Eva Galambos, PhD  
City of Sandy Springs



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# Vote “Yes” for Sandy Springs

Sandy Springs and the U.S. Postal Service will host a public information meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 24, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. to answer businesses and residents’ questions regarding the proposed change in the USPS “preferred last line” for mailing addresses from “Atlanta” to “Sandy Springs.”



The Postal Service will mail Sandy Springs residents and businesses a survey in early 2012, asking for a “yes” or “no” vote to the question, “Do you support the requested last line default of your mailing address to be changed from Atlanta to Sandy Springs?”

A “yes” vote will change the default “preferred last line” to Sandy Springs, but those who wish to continue to use Atlanta on letterhead, business cards, and other items will be able to continue using Atlanta.

City leaders cite three key factors in support of a “yes” vote:

- Financial – The sales tax in Atlanta is 8%. In Sandy Springs it is 7%. When the USPS software is used to determine tax (online sales, cars, furniture), Sandy Springs shoppers are paying 1% more than needed. The added 1% is used to fund the City of Atlanta’s water and sewer fund, and does not support Sandy Springs.
- Safety - \$1.50 of each monthly telephone bill supports 911 services. City leaders want to ensure dollars meant for Sandy Springs, and in particular the ChatComm 911 system, stay within Sandy Springs.
- Pride –Sandy Springs is now in its 6th year, and residents and businesses deserve the option to choose Sandy Springs as their preferred default city.

“This is a win-win for Sandy Springs and the businesses located here. We are asking businesses to support this change that will help us keep local dollars at home,” said City Manager John McDonough. “Simply stated, changing the default City in the USPS database from Atlanta to Sandy Springs will ensure that the sales tax rate is lower and that 911 fees stay in Sandy Springs.”

The public information meeting will be held in the Sandy Springs City Hall Council Chambers located at 7840 Roswell Road, Building 500.

## CERT- Community Emergency Response Team



Do you want to get more involved with the community? Do you have an interest in emergency preparedness? The Sandy Springs Fire Rescue Department has limited openings in its next training class for the Community Emergency Response Team.

The CERT program educates residents about disaster preparedness for hazards that may have an impact on their area, and trains them in basic disaster response skills including fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations. Using the training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT members can assist others in their neighborhood or workplace following an event when professional responders have yet to arrive on the scene. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in emergency preparedness projects in their community.

The February CERT training class will be held each Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon at Sandy Springs Fire Station 4, located at 4697 Wieuca Road. The 16-hour course is broken down in to four classes. To register, contact the Sandy Springs Fire Rescue Department at 770-730-5600. Each person trained will receive an emergency response kit, CERT materials and outreach materials.

## Winter Ready?

As we enter the months when Old Man Winter is most likely to share a bit of frozen precipitation, are you winter ready? Winter “supplies” that are good to have on hand include non-perishable food including food for your pet, bottled water and essential household items, as well as needed medical supplies. It’s also good to have a bag or two of sand or cat litter in supply to help grit your driveway and a windshield scraper to help clear off ice.

When snow and ice does fall, check the city’s Facebook page for updates. You can see those updates at facebook.com/CoSSGA or via the city’s website at sandyspringsga.gov.

- There are three ways you can report issues and road hazards (all year round):
- Online - twitter.com/sandyspringsga
  - Call - Citizen Response Center at 770.730.5600
  - Via Cell – CoSSpotter (this free app for iPhone, Android or Blackberry can be downloaded from our website at sandyspringsga.gov)



## Do you know your flood risk?



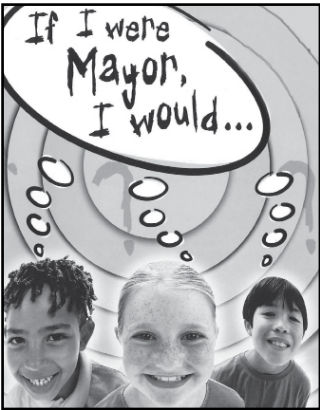
Enter in your address at <http://gis.sandyspringsga.org/floodmapping/> to see what the preliminary maps show.

New preliminary flood maps, known as Digital Flood Insurance Rate Maps (DFIRMs), have been released. The maps were developed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the Federal Emergency Management Agency based on the latest digital mapping technology.

The new flood maps will show (on a property by property basis) the extent to which parcels are currently at risk for flooding, taking into account changes in topography, land use and drainage patterns. If the risk level for a property changes, flood insurance and building requirements change as well. When the maps become effective, residents and business owners may find that their flood risk is higher or lower than they thought.

You may stay up-to-date and look up your property on the new map by visiting GeorgiaDFIRM.com. For more information on flood insurance, visit the National Flood Insurance Program’s website, [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov).

## If I Were Mayor, I Would...



The Georgia Municipal Association is inviting all sixth grade students to participate in a statewide essay contest to answer the question, “If I were Mayor, I would...”

The contest gives students a chance to creatively use their language arts skills and knowledge of civics/ social studies. Twelve winners – one from each of the GMA’s districts – will be selected and invited, along with their parents, teacher and local mayor, to an awards luncheon in April. Prizes include a \$250.00 savings bond, and each student who submits an essay will receive a certificate of participation.

Essays must be submitted by March 2, 2012 and cannot exceed 350 words. Entry forms should include the student’s name, school and school address, phone number, and name of student’s teacher and a contact phone number. One entry form can be used for an entire class (GMA wants everyone to participate!).

For more information, visit [www.gmanet.com](http://www.gmanet.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Monday, January 16, 2012 - *MLK Day Celebration* - The City of Sandy Springs is honoring the legendary Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with the presentation of the 2012 Humanitarian Award at 10:00 a.m. at City Hall located at 7840 Roswell Road, Building 500.

Tuesday, January 17, 2012 - *Roswell Road Bridge over I-285 Open House* - The Georgia Department of Transportation and the City are hosting a public meeting to answer questions. The meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. at City Hall.

Tuesday, January 24, 2012 - The US Postal Service and the City will hold a public information meeting regarding the proposed change to the default last line in mailing addresses. The meeting will be at 10:00 a.m. at City Hall Council Chambers.



May 6, 2012 - The Global Imports Sandy Springs Cycling Challenge returns with a new sidekick - The Sandy Springs Food & Wine Classic. Stay tuned for more details.

**Sandy Springs Food & Wine Classic**

## Have a Question - Who Do You Call?



Call 24 hours a day, seven days a week to get your questions answered and your concerns heard.

The City’s Citizen Response Center provides you with a single point of contact when you have a question or would like to report an issue. The Citizen Response Center staff personally answers calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Our Citizen Response Center staff can help connect you to the best person to handle your request, and each call is logged and tracked. When you want to know “who to call,” remember a single number - **770.730.5600** – our Citizen Response Center is here to serve you.